

Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History
November 29th, 2016

20th Anniversary of the Historic UNC Housekeepers' Agreement

November 26, 1996

PETITIONERS

Marsha Tinnen
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Barbara Prear
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Larry Farrar
Counsel for
Petitioners

**HOUSEKEEPERS'
ASSOCIATION**

Marsha Tinnen
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Barbara Prear
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Larry Farrar
Larry Farrar

Rae Bond
Rae Bond

Rebecca Torain
Rebecca Torain

Linda Kenan
Linda Kenan

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH
CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL**

Chancellor Michael Hooker
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Special Deputy Attorney General
Counsel for UNC-CH
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Early Resistance on Campus

1940 Janitor's Association was formed by four African American housekeepers

- Due to threats to cut their 25 cent hourly wage by 10%
- Won week of paid vacation for janitors and the installation of restrooms with showers.

1942 Janitor's Association becomes first union organized on campus

- Local 403 of the State, County, and Municipal Workers of America, affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

1969 Cafeteria Workers Strike

History of Housekeepers' Grievance Case:

SPRING, 1991: Housekeepers Association was formed and a Grievance was filed with their supervisor, on behalf of all Housekeepers in the three lowest pay-grades, 50, 51, and 52.

October 1991: 35 women sign petition.

September 18, 1992: over 250 people march down Franklin Street and across campus at noon to protest the University's lack of action in the housekeepers' case.

NOVEMBER, 1992: Chancellor Hardin refused to allow their lawyers to represent them in hearings, **refused the class action grievance**, and denied there was racism in the pay, training and promotion practices, and supervisory practices.

History of Housekeepers' Grievance Case:

DECEMBER, 1992: The Steering Committee of the Housekeepers Association, having obtained over 100 signed authorizations, filed a Contested Case Petition with the Office of Administrative Hearings, charging race discrimination at the University.

CP 378
UE 129

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER, 1993: The University made several motions to dismiss the Contested Case. Judge Brenda Becton denied them, and ruled a Hearing could be held that winter.

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER, 1993: The University filed an extraordinary Writ of Certiorari with another Judge, asking for an immediate review of Judge Becton's order. He granted the Writ and dismissed the Contested Case.

NOVEMBER, 1993 – APRIL, 1995: his ruling was appealed and the Court of Appeals agreed to send the case back to Judge Becton for a hearing.

APRIL, 1995 – JUNE, 1995: The University petitioned to the Supreme Court to overturn Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court denied its petition.

JANUARY, 1996: The Chancellor asked the HKA for a proposal to settle the case. The HKA met and came up with **A MODEST PROPOSAL**.

Chancellor Hooker told the press the "modest proposal" was "excessive in the extreme." The HKA returned to prepare for their hearing.





Lawyer Alan McSurely talks with Barbara Prear, a housekeeper at UNC-CH, after a meeting of the housekeepers Thursday.

STAFF PHOTO BY ROBERT WILLETT

HOUSEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION PETITIONERS

Marsha Tinnen, Barbara Prear, Larry Farrar, Lena Dean, Renee Bond,
Hassie Thompson, Annie Pettiford, and Rebecca Torrain





DTH/CHRIS GAYDOSH

Members of the Black Student Movement Gospel Choir perform in the Pit for the housekeepers. Provost Richard McCormick also spoke at the event.

HOUSEKEEPERS APPRECIATION DAY 1994



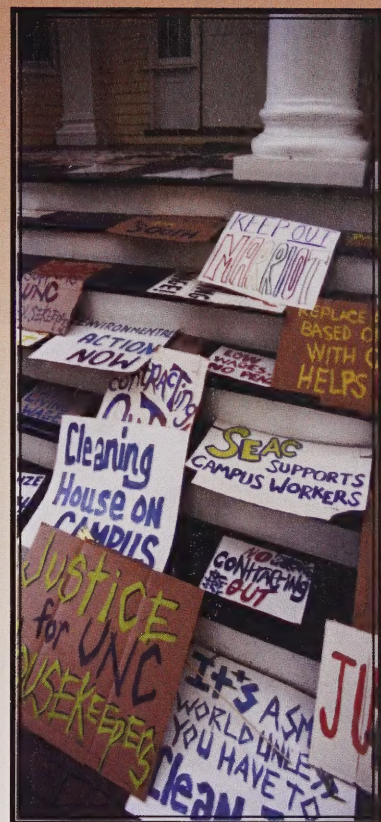
HOUSEKEEPERS GET THEIR DAY IN THE SUN

TOP: Johnnie Artis, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc., serves UNC housekeepers lunch in the Pit on Monday afternoon.

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**Housekeepers Student
Organizing Committee**



STUDENT SUPPORT FOR THE HOUSEKEEPERS

Summary of “A Modest Proposal”

January 1996

Painful historical facts

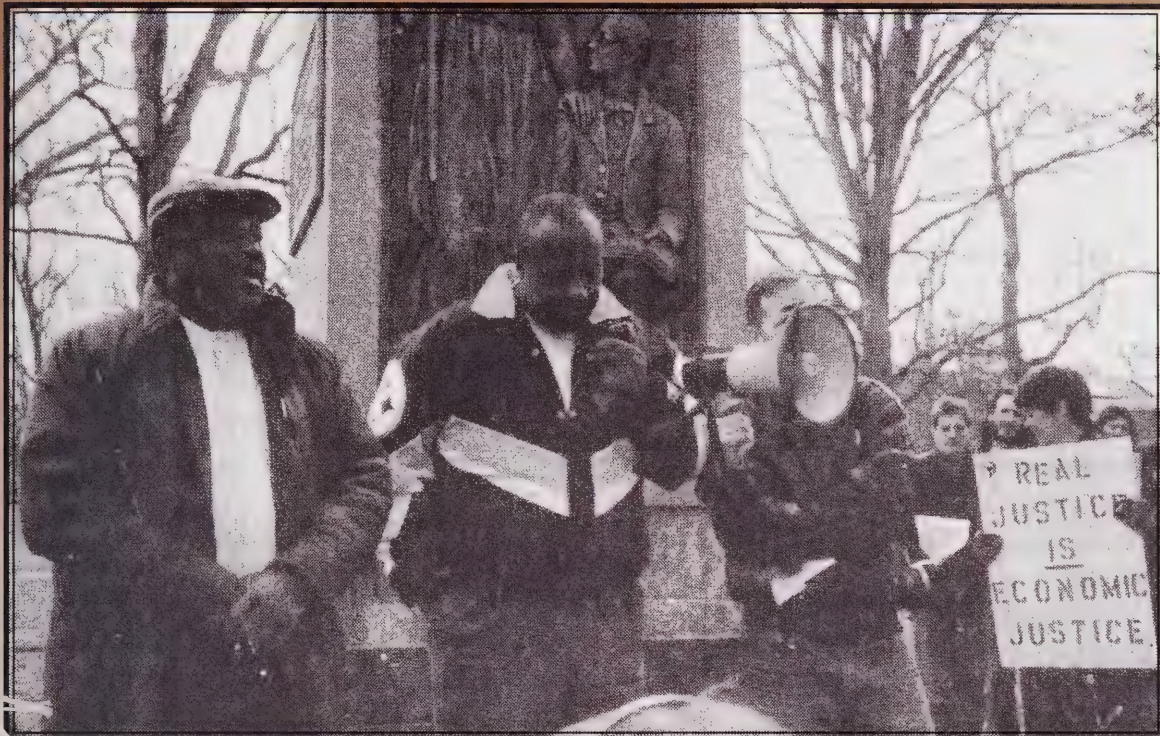
- The University adopted civil service job categories in the 1930s that set lower starting pay for Black workers.
- The University had no training opportunities for Black employees.
- No health and dental benefits. Minimal holiday time.
- The University owned slaves who worked for nothing during its first sixty years.

Painful current facts

The University reaps \$Millions from televised and other commercial exploitation of its black athletes. Therefore, the Modest Proposal included these demands:

A HOUSEKEEPER ENDOWMENT FUND TO BE SET-UP, FUNDED BY UNC SUPER PROFITS GAINED FROM ITS BLACK ATHLETES — TO FUND:

- ONE-TIME CASH PAYMENT FOR EVERY HOUSEKEEPER AND FAMILY
- BACK PAY FOR EVERY HOUSEKEEPER FROM OCTOBER, 1990
- SUPPLEMENT HOUSEKEEPERS PAY TO A LIVING WAGE, UNTIL STATE DOES SAME
- NEW CAREERS FOR 100 HOUSEKEEPERS EACH YEAR WITH A GUARANTEED JOB
- FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR HOUSEKEEPER’S CHILDREN & GRANDCHILDREN
- FREE HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE FOR HOUSEKEEPERS & FAMILIES

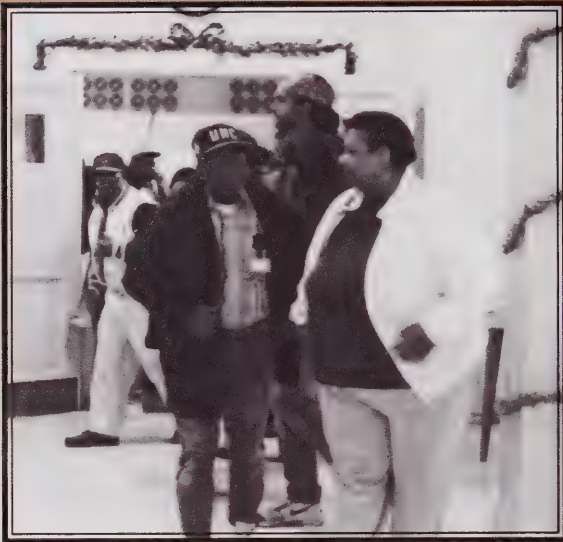


Above: Hank Anderson, Fred Battle, and (holding the megaphone) Yonni Chapman relate the history of UNC beneath the gaze of the Silent Sam Confederate Memorial on campus.

Below: Marsha Tinnen with a megaphone talks about the Housekeepers' grievances as she stands with members of UNC Housekeepers Association at the Memorial.



Housekeepers vote at Hill Hall



November 1996

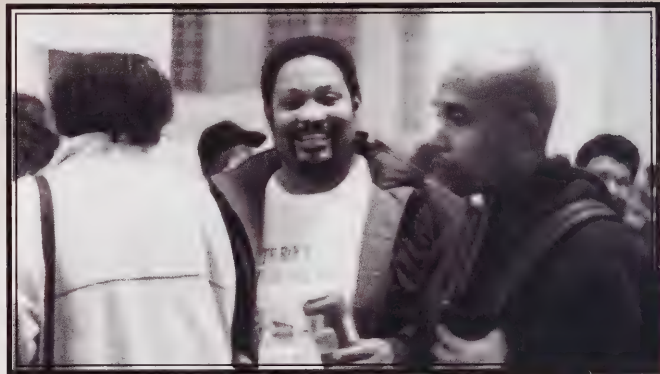
Housekeepers decide to accept the settlement.

Memorable moment:

Vision of the housekeepers coming across campus to Hill Hall auditorium at dawn.

300 housekeepers were in the Hall.

Used paper ballots to overwhelmingly accept the agreement.



NAACP NEWS

UNC HOUSEKEEPERS WIN SETTLEMENT

MEDIATED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

All of the parties to the proceeding styled Tinnen v. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, No. 92 OSP 1711 in the Office of Administrative Hearings (the "Action"), agree as follows:

1. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ("UNC-CH") has executed this agreement today and shall hereafter implement the attached and incorporated "Revised Initiatives Designed to Improve Conditions for Housekeepers and Other Lowest Paid Employees" ("Revised Initiatives").

2. The parties agree that the Action, which has been certified as a class action, but not yet made subject to notice as such, shall be decertified as a class action upon approval of the Presiding Administrative Law Judge.

3. The parties and the Housekeepers' Association (which is joining in this agreement to signify its concurrence in the terms of this agreement and its stated endorsement of the Revised Initiatives) shall execute a replica of this agreement at a ceremony to be held in December of 1996 on the steps of South Building. "A reception will be held at UNC-CH's expense for all UNC-CH housekeepers and their families at an appropriate time and location on campus."

4. Following decertification of the class, the Petitioners will dismiss the Action with prejudice on condition that UNC-CH pay to Petitioner's counsel, McSurely, Dorosin & Osment, the sum of \$55,000 in lieu of counsel fees, costs and other expenses of litigation. UNC-CH shall also pay the entire cost of mediation.

November 26, 1996

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Chancellor Michael Hooker
Chancellor Michael Hooker

Debra Keler
Counsel for UNC-CH
Special Deputy Attorney
General

Settlement Summary - November 26, 1996

- One-time Christmas bonus of \$600 and a significant annual pay raise
- Monthly meeting with Chancellor's office to "meet, confer and consider" ideas of the Housekeepers Association
- New career training programs
- Commission to honor African American workers at UNC with the University's slave history brought more to the forefront
- Commission to improve housekeeper's health
 - UNC to commission the School of Public Health to analyze the effect of work conditions on the housekeepers
- Chancellor agreed to increase his efforts to provide for dependent's health insurance and expedite access to free medical and dental care at the University for housekeepers



The UNC Housekeeper Movement inspired Black workers who worked for the Town of Chapel Hill and other public employees to organize and demand better working conditions. Photograph: Members of the Black Public Works Association at the Town Hall after presenting the Freedom Budget to Chapel Hill's Town Council in 1995.

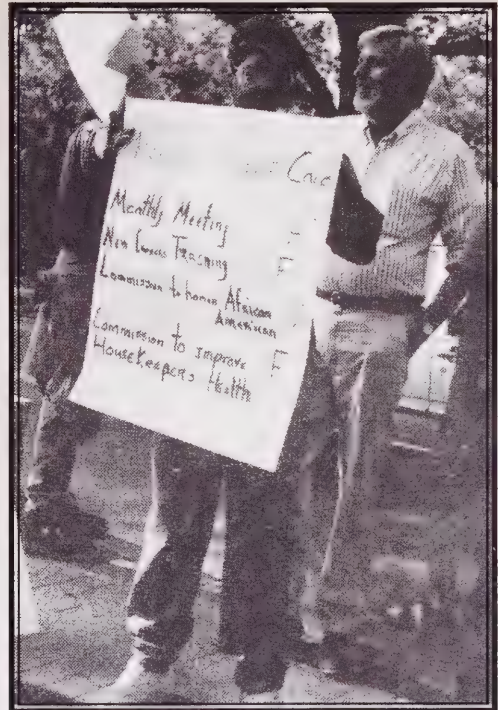


Above: Renee Bond, Al McSurely, Linda Kenan, Marsha Tinnen, and Rebecca Torain at the banquet commemorating the signing of the historic agreement between the HKA and UNC. Photo by Susan Simone and Yonni Chapman.

One Year Later



Left: UNC HKA Steering Committee members Barbara Prear (center), Larry Farrar and Marsha Tinnen, flanked by UNC students from the CEJ celebrate the settlement announcement. Photo by Susan Simone.





HOOKER'S REPORT CARD

Monthly
Meetings **F**

New Careers
Training **F**

Commission to Honor
African-Americans **IN-
COMPLETE**

Commission to Improve
Housekeeper Health **F**

TOP: Housekeepers march on University Day to protest Chancellor's inattention to the historic Housekeepers Settlement agreement and to support Unionization. LEFT: Chancellor Hooker meets with Housekeepers at a banquet to honor the settlement, signed a year ago. Photos by (top) Yonni Chapman, (left) Susan Simone.

GRADING THE CHANCELLOR

One year ago Chancellor Hooker signed a 3-year agreement with the UNC Housekeepers Association. We asked how Hooker had done in holding up his end of the bargain.

MLK ANNUAL REPORT: *How did the Chancellor do on his promises?*

HOUSEKEEPER ASSOCIATION (HKA): Poorly. Overall, we gave him a grade of D-.

MLK: *Let's talk about specifics. There were several promises made in the agreement; let's take them one by one. How has he done with the back pay?*

HKA: He got us bonus checks before Christmas last year. This is the only reason we didn't give him a failing grade, "F."

MLK: *What about meeting regularly with the HKA?*

HKA: The monthly meetings are poorly organized. The Chancellor and Dr. Floyd do not come. We have not been consulted about the agendas. Our issues are simple: improving pay and working conditions, ending stupid management practices, and stopping privatization. Ms. Laurie Charest and Ms. Barbara DeLon (Housekeeping management) push their views. Hooker agreed to "meet, confer, and consider" our ideas -- not theirs.

MLK: *What about the Training Program?*

HKA: The Chancellor broke the contract when he set up the Training Program Board. He had the same guy who has been Training Director for the University to help run the program -- the guy who never lifted a finger for the Housekeepers. He is supposed to be leaving in early 1998.

MLK: *What about the study and changes which were supposed to*



improve the health of housekeepers?

HKA: It got lost in a political fight at the Public Health Department. We told the Chancellor we wanted Dr. John Hatch to represent us. They began to hold meetings about this a year later.

MLK: *What about the Commission to Honor African American Workers?*

HKA: We have not heard anything about this.

MLK: *What about the Chancellor's promise to work for better, cheaper health care and insurance for the housekeepers? Elder care, child care?*

HKA: He has not done anything, as far as we know.

MLK: *What about Chancellor Hooker leading a fight to get more scholarships for the Housekeepers?*

HKA: Nothing yet.

MLK: *It seems that the struggle with the University is not over.*

HKA: No, it's not. But, as you know, we are trying to form a statewide union. We could all work together to get us up to a Living Wage of over \$20,000 and secure good benefits and access to educational resources. We remain committed and organized. The struggle continues.

Housekeepers To Air Woes In Meeting

Moeser, officials will consider grievances

BY DANIEL THIGPEN

University Editor

Chancellor James Moeser will sit down to talk with frustrated housekeepers this morning, nearly four months after workers first contacted him about various concerns with the Housekeeping Services Department.

Although the meeting is a private discussion between administrators, faculty and the housekeepers, a group of students and others is expected to gather at South Building to express their support for the workers.

Kelly White, a junior women's studies major, is helping to organize part of the demonstration. Early Friday morning, White sent an e-mail to a group of people asking them to attend the gathering at 9 a.m. today. Others since have distributed the message over e-mail listservs.

The demonstration likely will be a low-key event with no speakers lined up, White said. "It's more just to have students there," she said. "It's to show support."

White was not sure how many people

are expected to attend today, but she said she hopes other housekeepers will make it to the event.

Inside South Building, Moeser will be meeting with housekeepers who have harbored a laundry list of frustrations for months.

In October, a group of housekeepers sent a letter to the chancellor asking for a meeting in regards to various concerns within the department. Moeser requested that Laurie Charest, associate vice chancellor for human resources, set up a meeting with Carolyn Elfland, associate vice chancellor for campus services, and Bill Burston, director of housekeeping.

The result was two meetings in December between the administrators and the housekeepers involved in the conflict. Charest prepared summaries of each meeting for the chancellor and those in attendance.

At least two of the housekeepers at the forefront of the process were not satisfied with the action taken after those

See HOUSEKEEPERS, Page 2

THE UNC HOUSEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Sources:

**Southern Historical Collection
University Archives
Wilson Special Collection Library,
University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill:**

Alan McSurely Papers # 04928, 1928-1985 (bulk 1960s-1980s)

John Kenyon "Yonni" Chapman Papers # 05441, 1969-2009
(source for the colored photographs and Hill Hall Ballot photographs in this pamphlet)

Office of Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill:
Paul Hardin Records # 40025, 1988-1995

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